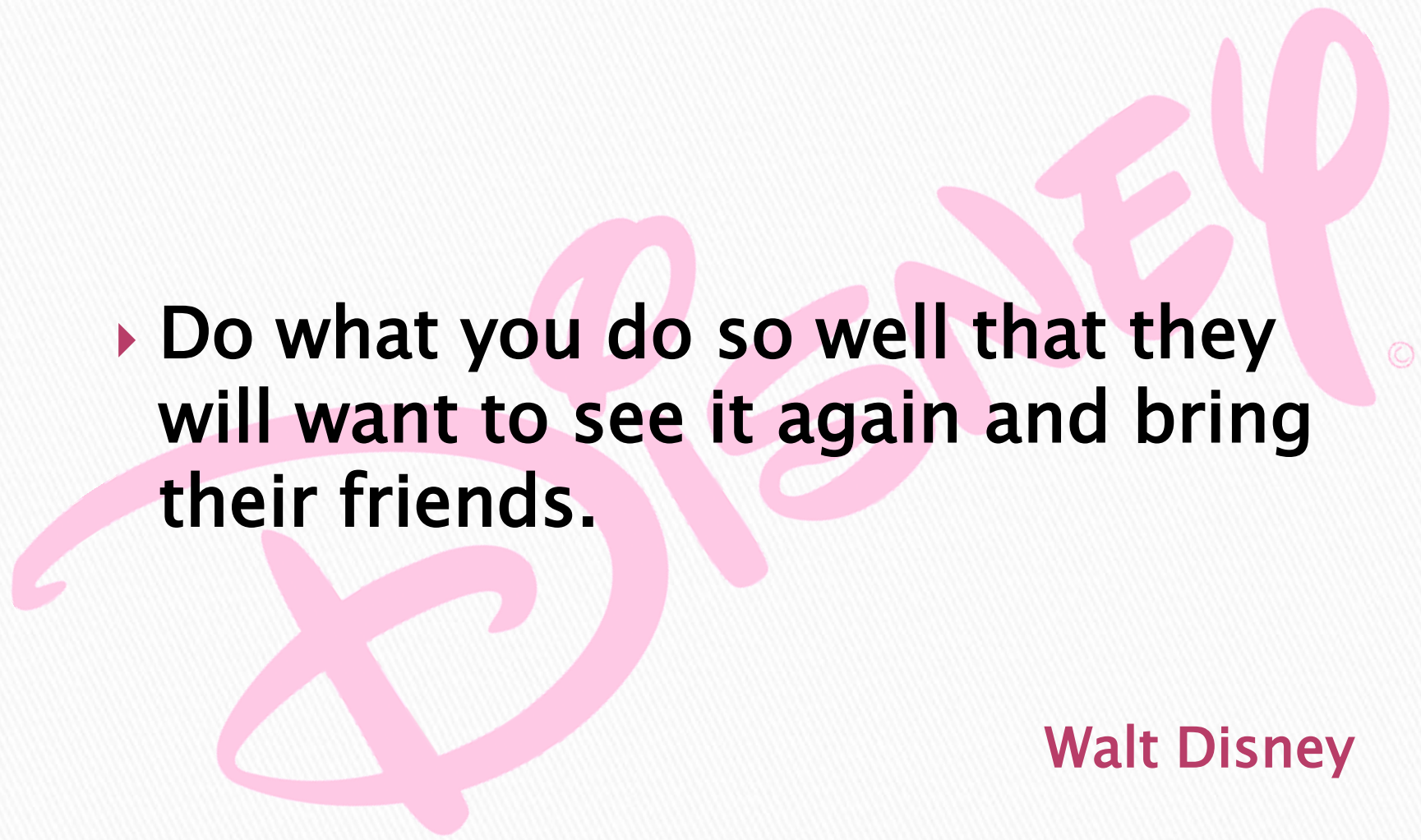


Customer Service

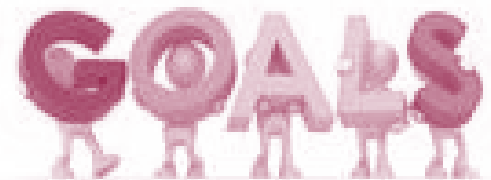
DWD Training Team

- 
- ▶ Do what you do so well that they will want to see it again and bring their friends.

Walt Disney

Today's Goals

- ▶ Explore the characteristics needed to provide good customer service.
- ▶ Learn how to use verbal and nonverbal communication and active listening skills to connect with customers.
- ▶ Discuss the importance of follow up and learn strategies for following up with customers.



Necessary Characteristics

- ▶ Patient
- ▶ Tenacious
- ▶ Empathic
- ▶ Attentive
- ▶ Persuasive
- ▶ Knowledgeable
- ▶ Flexible

I AM A...

WINNER ○

LOSER ○



Patience

- ▶ Show patience, especially when the job seeker is confused or frustrated.
 - If a job seeker asks a question ten times, answer the question ten times. (After the first couple of times, find a different way to answer the question!)
 - This does not give you permission or an excuse to be slow or respond slowly.
 - Do not show your frustration (Get rid of the eye-rolling and sighing!)



Tenacity

► Demonstrate a great work ethic.



- Be a good role model for the job seeker – you are being watched!
- Be willing to get things done and see the task through to the end.
- Never ignore someone no matter how exhausted you are.
- Never “cheat” your customers with lazy service.

Empathy

- ▶ Feel what the other person is feeling.
 - Go beyond “What would I do in this situation?”
 - We would, obviously, handle the situation differently –
 - We are not afraid of nor threatened by the Job Center.
 - We know the benefits and advantages of using the services of the Job Center.
 - We often suffer from the “Curse of Knowledge.”

EMPATHY

Attentiveness

- ▶ Look beyond the surface and listen beyond the words.
 - Don't depend on a customer's exact wording.
 - Consider what your customers are not saying.
 - Pay attention to nonverbal communication – look for cues about mood, patience level, and personality.
 - Listen for content and emotion.



Persuasiveness

- ▶ Convince the customer that Job Center services are the right fit.
 - Be able to close the conversation with a high level of satisfaction for the customer.
 - The customer should feel like everything that could be done was done.
 - Use positive language; focus on how to get resolution instead of focusing on the negative.



Knowledgeable

- ▶ Have a deep understanding of services offered at the Job Center.
- ▶ Know how to help customers when they run into problems.
- ▶ Be willing to learn from your experiences.



Flexibility

- ▶ Recognize the individuality of each customer.
 - Be able to handle surprises.
 - Come up with guidelines to handle “never-before-seen” situations.
 - Deal with customers on a case-by-case basis.
 - Know the “go-to” person for dealing with difficult customers or situations.



Questions

- ▶ What other characteristics are important when providing quality customer service?



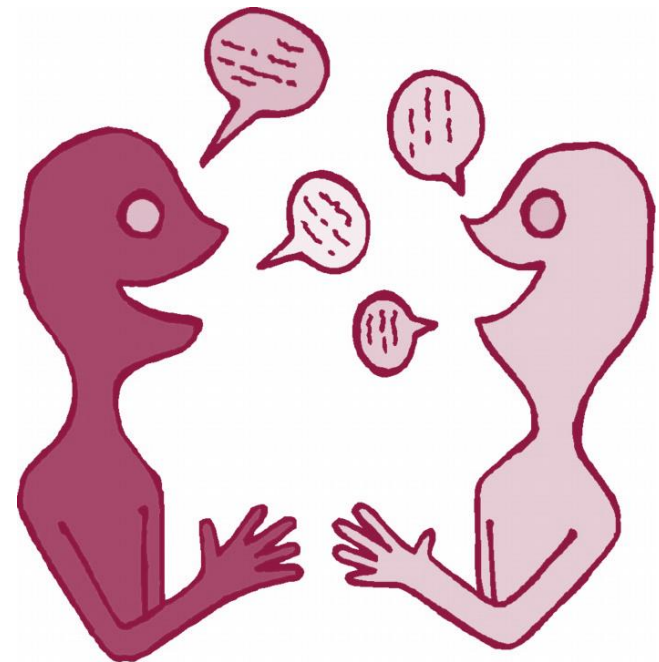
Verbal Communication

- ▶ Verbal communication involves the words we use when sending a message.
 - A word is simply a symbol.
 - Meanings reside in the people, not in the words.
 - Words have emotions – good and bad – attached to them.
The emotions also reside in the people, not in the words.



Communicate Verbally

- ▶ Even though words are a small part of messages and meaning, they are very powerful. Use them with caution!
 - Avoid Trigger Words – words that stir up strong emotions in people.
 - Avoid other Triggers – profanity, slurs, labels, etc.
 - Use specific language.
 - Turn negative words and phrases into positive words and phrases.



Turn Negative to Positive

- ▶ Instead of –
 - “You have to....”
 - “You must...”
 - “It’s required....”
 - “It’s necessary....”
 - “Policy states....”
- ▶ Try –
 - “Will you....”
 - “It works when....”
 - “We’ve discovered...”



Turn Negative to Positive

- ▶ Instead of –
 - “Why don’t you....”
- ▶ Try –
 - “What have you considered? Would you consider....”
- ▶ Instead of –
 - “You should have....”
- ▶ Try –
 - “Here’s what we can do now....”



Turn Negative to Positive

- ▶ Instead of –
 - “No...”
 - “It’s impossible...”
 - “Wait...”
 - “Wrong...”

- ▶ Try –
 - “Let’s see what we can do....”
 - “One solution is...”
 - “One way to handle this is...”



Turn Negative to Positive

- Instead of –
 - “What’s your problem?”
- Try –
 - “Tell me about the difficulty you’re having.”
- Instead of –
 - “It’s not my job.”
- Try
 - “Here’s how I can help.”
- Instead of –
 - “I don’t know.”
- Try –
 - “Let me find that answer for you.”



The Art of Asking Questions

- ▶ Don't ask yes or no questions.
 - You often get incomplete information.
 - Questions with “would,” “should,” “is,” “are,” and “do you think,” all lead to yes or no answers.
- ▶ Instead, ask open-ended questions.
 - Questions with “who,” “what,” “where,” “when,” and “why,” lead to people giving thought to their answers and provide more information.



The Art of Asking Questions

- ▶ Use good follow-up questions to go beyond “just the facts.”



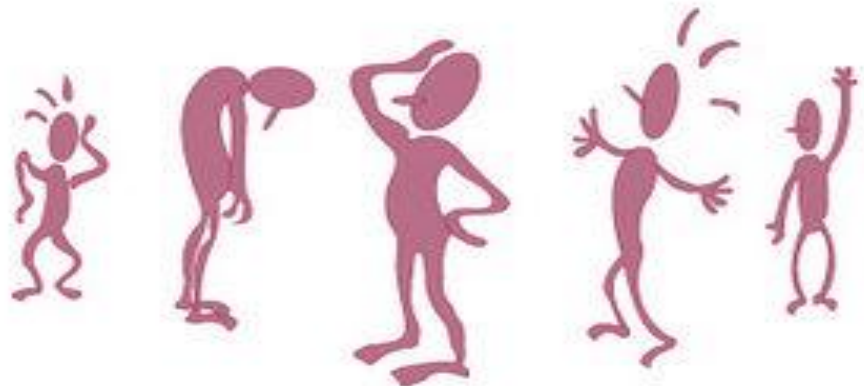
- Follow-up questions give you more insight and let you form your own opinions.
- Ask “What makes you say that?”
- Ask “Why do you think that?”

The Art of Asking Questions

- ▶ Use silence to get answers.
 - Wait for an answer – wait for as long as two minutes!
- ▶ Don't interrupt!
 - Interrupting sends the message “I don't care about what you are saying.”
 - Interrupting directs the conversation the way you want it to go – not necessarily the way it should go.
 - If the person gets off track, say something like “So what I'm hearing is...” or “I want to make sure I understand....”

Communicate Nonverbally

- ▶ Nonverbal communication makes up 93% of our messages and meaning. Be aware of nonverbals – yours and others!
 - Nonverbal communication is ambiguous.
 - Nonverbal communication is multi-channelled.
 - Nonverbal communication is more believable than verbal communication, and, therefore, more difficult to fake.

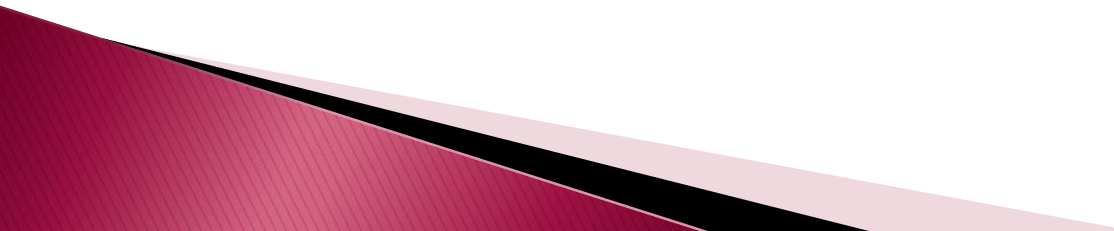


Nonverbal Channels

- Posture
- Gestures
- Movement
- Space
- Territory
- Environment
- Eye contact
- Facial Expressions
- Appearance
- Touch
- The Voice



Sending Nonverbals

- ▶ Keep an open posture.
 - ▶ Monitor your facial expressions – especially those micro-expressions.
 - ▶ Vary the pitch, tone, volume, and rate of your voice.
 - ▶ Maintain eye contact; get on the same level.
 - ▶ Smile, lean in, provide feedback with head nods or shakes or with backchannel cues.
- 

Reading Others

- ▶ Pay attention to all nonverbal channels; listen with your eyes.
- ▶ Recognize patterns; store information for future conversations.



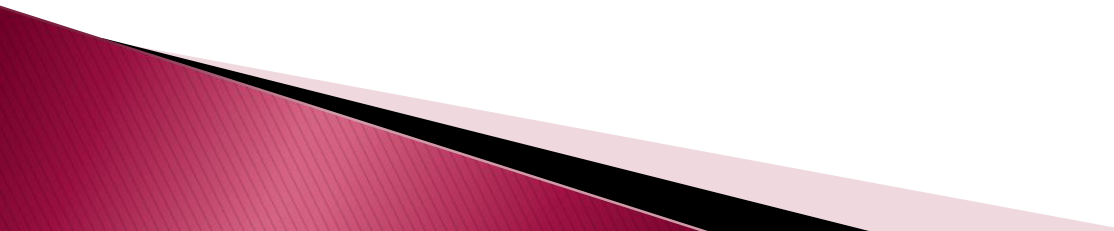
- ▶ Perception-check by asking questions or monitoring behavior.
- ▶ Practice.

Hearing vs. Listening

- ▶ Hearing is physiological – sound waves enter the auditory canal and strike the eardrum, causing it to vibrate.
- ▶ Listening is a process of attaching meaning to what we hear. Listening involves five steps or stages: selecting, attending, understanding, remembering, and responding.



The Listening Process

- ▶ **Selecting** – Choose a sound from competing sounds.
 - ▶ **Attending** – Turn your focus to that sound.
 - ▶ **Understanding** – Decode the message; assign meaning to the message.
 - ▶ **Remembering** – Store the message in short-term or long-term memory.
 - ▶ **Responding** – Provide feedback to confirm the message has been received and understood.
- 

Engage in Active Listening

- ▶ Active listening is a powerful form of communication.
 - Be patient while the speaker speaks; pay attention to the whole message.
 - Listen for content and the emotions behind the message.
 - Mentally summarize the details of the message; relate details to the main ideas.
 - Identify your listening goal – Why do you need this information? How will you use this information?

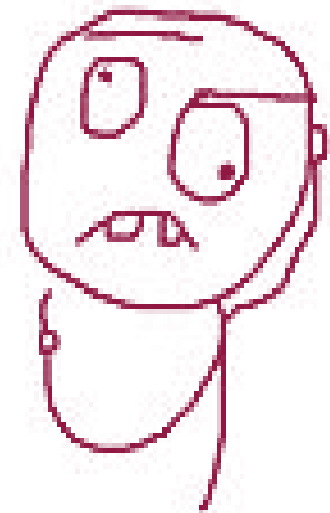
Active Listening Tools

- ▶ Face the speaker.
- ▶ Keep your hands and feet still.
- ▶ Lean forward slightly.
- ▶ Maintain eye contact.
- ▶ Use facial expressions and head nods to show you are listening.
- ▶ Use backchannel cues (uh-huh, uh-hum, I see, okay, etc.) to show you are listening.



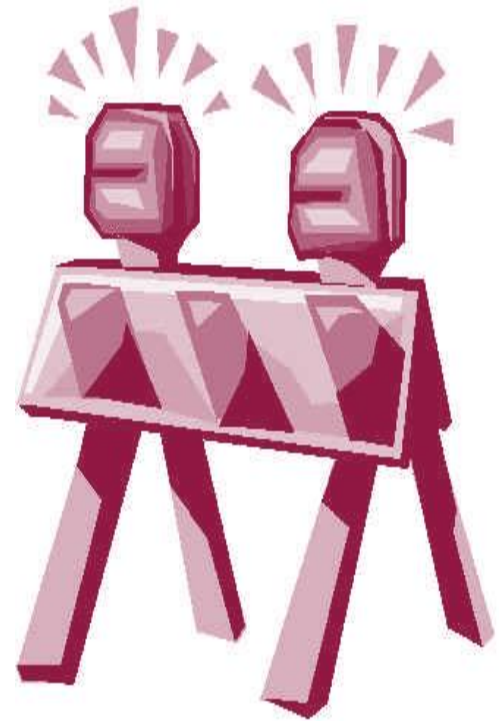
Verify Understanding

- ▶ Instead of *thinking* you understand the message, make sure you *know* you understand the message.
 - Paraphrase the message for both content and emotions.
 - “Sounds like you’re excited about...”
 - “What I’m hearing you say is...”



Be Aware of Listening Barriers

- Self-Barriers
 - Self-Focus
 - Emotional Noise
 - Criticism
- Information-Processing Barriers
 - Processing Rate
 - Information Overload
 - Shifting Attention
- Context Barriers
 - Time
 - Place



Improve Listening Skills

- ▶ An easy way to improve listening skills is:
 - **Stop**
 - Turn off competing noises and distractions.
 - Step away from your thoughts and focus on the speaker.
 - **Look**
 - Listen with your eyes – watch for nonverbal messages too.
 - **Listen**
 - Relate the message to your needs; be an active listener.



Questions

- ▶ What questions or concerns do you have about communicating with customers?



The Follow-Up

- ▶ The importance of following-up with customers cannot be overstated, yet we hesitate and procrastinate.
 - We think we might be pushy or bothersome.
 - We think they are not interested; otherwise, they would be contacting us.
 - We don't know what to say.



Suggestions for Follow-Up

- ▶ Follow-up within 3 days of the initial meeting, then follow-up regularly.
- ▶ Mix it up – with emails, calls, etc.
- ▶ Learn about their lives; find common ground.
- ▶ Build a relationship with the veteran.
- ▶ Make the follow-up about them, not you.
- ▶ Treat them like equals, not subordinates.



Specific Strategies

- ▶ Follow-up contact should be a value for the customer, so plan what you want to say.
 - Tell them about a book or article or website or video that might help them.
 - Tell them about upcoming events.
 - Invite them to a “brown-bag” lunch or a “coffee and conversation” where you share information.
 - Ask if they have questions or have run into problems, etc.
 - Send a personal note with your business card.

Create a Positive Outcome

- ▶ Keep the customer happy.
- ▶ Contribute to the customer's success.
- ▶ Realize the customer is a primary source of recruiting new customers.



Keep in Mind...

- ▶ Customers are the most important people in the Job Center.
- ▶ Customers are not interruptions to our work; they are the reason for our work.
- ▶ Customers are not dependent on us; we are dependent on them.
- ▶ Customers are doing us favors when they visit; we are not doing them favors when we provide services.



Questions and Discussion

- ▶ What suggestions can you offer to your colleagues?
- ▶ What questions do you have?



Resources

- Beebe, Beebe, and Ivy. *Communication Principles for a Lifetime. 5th Ed.* Pearson: Boston, 2013.
- Crotti, Gregory. “15 Customer Service Skills that Every Employee Needs. *Help Scout.* 20 Feb. 2013.
- Cumbay, Traci. *Managing All-in-One for Dummies.* John Wiley and Sons, Inc.: Hoboken, NJ, 2014.
- Zimmerman, Alan. *The Service Payoff.* USA: Peak Performance Publishers, 2011.

For Additional Training

- ▶ Contact the DWD Training Unit for additional training opportunities.
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